





The Illustrious Sage, True Lord Erlang (Part 2)

Within the territory of a certain shrine, Kusanagi Godou encountered the unidentified [Three Eyes].

Ten-odd minutes after that, Amakasu Touma arrived in a hurry. His true identity was actually a History Compilation Committee special agent descended from ninja(!) ancestors.

"Huh? Illustrious Sage, True Lord Erlang... So that's what Yuri-san said."

Amakasu frowned after he found out the name whispered by the Hime-Miko who had received a spirit vision.

Furthermore, the person in question who had spoken the oracle was not currently present. Due to the younger sister Hikari's massive exhaustion from using disaster purification so fully, her elder sister Yuri had taken her home.

"Amakasu Touma, I seem to recall that name as belonging to the Chinese pantheon..."

Liliana, who had arrived just earlier, inquired.

Even though her knowledge and experiences were quite extensive, Liliana originated from Europe after all. Consequently, she was not very well-versed in Chinese myths.

"You are correct, Liliana-san. He is a Daoist deity in charge of regulating floods, although his reputation for monster extermination is probably more famous. As implied by the two kanji characters in the 'Illustrious Sage' title."

Amakasu wrote down the two kanji in a notebook.

Illustrious Sage.^[1] The one who illustrates—makes evident the sacred to manifest in the world...

"He is particularly renowned for the story where he subdued and captured Sun Wukong who was rampaging in both the celestial and terrestrial realms."

Godou recalled the name he had heard roughly half a month earlier.

—Family name Sun, given name Wukong. The self-proclaimed Great Sage Equaling Heaven. Descending upon the land of Nikkou once more, the war god in monkey form had announced thus.

"Could it be possible that the recent Great Sage Equaling Heaven is related to this incident?"

Liliana offered her opinion in her stern knightly tone of voice.

In her personal life, the silver-haired girl was presumptuously prone to blunders and easily shaken psychologically. But in combat and emergency situations, she was able to exercise 200% caution and composure.

"Correct again... As you already know, the deity stationed at Nikkou Tousehouguu for the goal of protecting Japan from the threats of dragon and snake gods is precisely the magnificent Chinese hero, the Great Sage Equaling Heaven."

Amakasu exhaled as he explained.

"To this end, the Old One and other elders in the Netherworld put into place the [Keeper of the Horses] wizardry spell for sealing the Great Sage. In actual fact, the spell's core component has ties to the deity—the Illustrious Sage, True Lord Erlang—and is a sacred talisman carrying evil-slaying powers."

"The Old One... In other words, the deity named Susanoo who watches over Seishuun Ena."

"Indeed. Since the Great Sage no longer exists, the talisman has lost its purpose. We of the Committee will undertake its retrieval. However, because it is a rare and precious evil-slaying talisman, we decided to test it out to see if it was able to resolve a certain unresolved case."

"You mean the matter of nullifying Marquis Voban's authority?"

In response to Liliana's statement of surprise, Amakasu shrugged and smiled wryly.

"Oh dear, because I happened by chance to recall there were two elite masters among those involved in the incident, so for the sake of saving lives, a risk was taken."

"Don't go asking me to suddenly take on these kinds of risks! Come on, that's so wrong I don't even know where to begin!"

"So where exactly is this problematic talisman currently?"

"Even though they were confident things were under control, I cannot believe the History Compilation Committee's core leadership allowed such a completely irresponsible experiment to proceed."

Liliana protested, her anger surfacing slightly

A car from the Committee had just taken Godou and her to the vicinity of the Minato ward. Currently, the two were making their way to the new destination on foot.

"Thanks to them, Kusanagi Godou, you were attacked by that strange thing..."

"It's not really that big a deal. After all, the people who were turned into salt statues were saved."

Appropriately expressing his naturally generous character, Godou replied with sincerity.

However, Liliana had a serious personality and she seemed to be objecting.

"Of course there is nothing with saying that, but I always get the same feeling from Sayanomiya Kaoru as I do from Erica."

Sayanomiya Kaoru. This was the full name of the person they were going to pay a visit.

Although she was still studying in high school, she was already in charge of the History Compilation Committee's operations in the entire Kantou region.

"You say she's the same as Erica?"

"Yes. Unscrupulous in choosing means to attain goals—uh, scratch that, unscrupulous in choosing goals to enable their preferred means to be undertaken. That is the similarity I am talking about."

"...I see."

Erica and Kaoru both belong to the scheming intellectual type.

Moreover, neither of them were calm and dispassionate Machiavellians. So long as circumstances permitted them to do so, they were strange characters who infused vainglory and fantasy into their work, choosing to attain goals in the most amusing manner available.

As Godou and Liliana chatted, they soon reached the destination.

Just outside a school's main gates, many girls could be seen exiting the school.

They were dressed in black uniforms. Although the uniforms looked tacky and unfashionable on first glance, closer examination revealed a rather refined and distinctive design.

A prestigious all-girls school that prided itself on being one of Tokyo's top schools in academics and tradition.

"Kaoru-san is actually a high school student too."

And even a high school girl too. Godou muttered to himself with heartfelt feeling.

She was not only a member of the Committee's core leadership but also a high-ranking and accomplished Hime-Miko. However, in a certain way, her position was diametrically opposed to that of a "high school girl."

When Godou called her just now to see if they could meet as soon as possible, he received the following response:

"We are currently busy with preparations for the cultural festival. I won't be free until a little later."

Feeling a great dissonance in hearing words like school or cultural festival coming from her, Godou approached the school gates to pick her up.

Taking a spot close to the school gates, he began to wait for Kaoru.

Perhaps he would have found it difficult to remain unflustered to stand before an all-girls school by himself as a man. But today, Liliana was also present—

"What's the matter?"

Seeing the silver-haired girl bearing an anxious expression, Godou inquired.

They were both wearing the uniform of their school, Jounan Academy. Due to various reasons, Liliana was also quite conspicuous in appearance. As the girls leaving school successively stared at her, Godou could not believe how unsettled she became.

With a depressed expression, Liliana explained quietly.

"I have unpleasant memories in regards to closed environments like 'all-girls schools.'"

"Did something unpleasant happen in the past?"

"Yes. A few years ago, Erica and I were both stuck in an awkward situation where we needed to infiltrate an all-girls boarding school. All kinds of things happened at the time..."

"Speaking of boarding school, did you get bullied!?"

"No, rather, it could be described as the opposite. For some unknown reason, Erica and I became the centers of popularity. Because of the kind of girl she is, Erica was able to adapt and react quite flexibly. On the other hand, I..."

Godou nodded deeply.

Erica was able to become the center of popularity wherever she went. In addition, a girl like Liliana, who was not only beautiful but also sternly dignified, would be popular because of being situated in "that kind of organization."

"No matter what I was doing I found myself surrounded heavily by those girls, without even a chance to eat my meals alone in peace. So troubling. Furthermore, Erica apparently found it quite interesting. She even said that she should take the opportunity to hold a salon gathering."

"From the way it looks, Kaoru-san also seems to be quite popular here."

Just as Godou echoed with his own observation, his cellphone vibrated from an incoming call.

Rather than Kaoru, it was Yuri who had called. Over the phone, she informed Godou that she expected to meet up with the two of them after she took Hikari home.



"Shizuka-san asked me to pass this along."

Godou received the takeout container of fried noodles from the Hime-Miko who had just arrived in one of the History Compilation Committee's cars. It was still warm.

"Just before I took Hikari to the car, Shizuka-san gave me this when I went to bid her goodbye."

"Come to think of it, she did mention she was going to treat us to fried noodles."

"She also had a message for you, Godou-san."

Yuri began to speak hesitantly with shyness for some unknown reason.

"Shizuka-san vigorously requested I pass to Godou-san this message urging you to get along well with me. I cannot help but feel embarrassed to hear something like that from a member of your family, Godou-san..."

The younger sister must have been displaying her usual angry expression when sarcastically requesting the message to be passed along.

But for better or worse, the sheltered high-class lady who had trouble understanding seemed to be accepting Shizuka's words with a positive interpretation.

Despite the embarrassment she felt, Yuri was displaying a blissful expression.

Shocked by the way she looked, Godou speechlessly lowered his gaze towards the noodles. No seaweed had been added to the noodles, presumably because Shizuka was being considerate for the girl accompanying her brother.

On the other hand, Liliana commented slightly sardonically.

"If Shizuka-san said this much, it looks like you and Mariya Yuri must have been having quite a delightful time together before I arrived."

"D-Don't say anything bizarre like quite delightful."

"I-Indeed. Godou-san and I were simply... Simply on a date, that is all—"

"Oh I see, a date huh."

"M-Mariya. Could you please pick a more prudent choice of words?"

"Eh? I am very sorry, did I say something strange just now?"

"No. Thank you for your valuable information, Mariya Yuri..."

Seeing Godou's frustration and Yuri's confusion, Liliana murmured:

"On further thought, this is completely not unexpected. Kusanagi Godou, in those kinds of situations, all it takes is a momentary opening for you to make a move. Your superb skills are truly astonishing. Swift, comprehensive, full of natural cunning—"

"Wait a minute, Liliana. What do you mean exactly by 'those kinds of situations'!?"

"Opportunities to further your intimacy in female relationships, of course."

Liliana declared as though she was a famous detective who had solved a mystery.

Just as Godou was about to protest, Yuri interjected before he could speak.

"P-Please do not judge so hastily. Although I have no objections in regards to assessing Godou-san as that type of person, the issue cannot be gainsaid completely."

"H-Hey, I'm the one objecting here."

"Godou-san. Do you not remember that you were the one who declared to Shizuka-san just now that our relationship is completely free from guilt?"

Even though Yuri did not necessarily offer full support, Godou would surely suffer her derision if he did not concur with her.

Despite being routed on two separate fronts, Godou still replied the following:

"Yes, that's true but I think calling it a date—"

"Given the current circumstances, how about Liliana-san join us as well for a double date?"

" "Eh?" "

Godou and Liliana's voices coincided in perfect unison.

"W-Well, a date refers to both genders spending time together enjoyably—Is there anything wrong with this definition? In that case, if that is what we all desire, I think there is no problem. Am I wrong?"

"...Somehow it does not feel exactly right, but I cannot assert it is wrong either."

Liliana murmured with a troubled expression.

"However, it feels like it is not exactly unacceptable... Oh well, since that female fox Erica is not among us three, I suppose it is fine."

"Liliana-san, please watch your language."

"No, Mariya Yuri. Perhaps you may not know because your time spent dealing with her is still short. That woman frequently seizes opportunities to play devilish pranks. Thinking back now, it is possible that Erica was partially responsible for my rapid rise to popularity in the boarding school..."

Caught up in Yuri's pace, Liliana began to rant upon the subject.

On the other hand, Godou breathed a sigh of relief for the temporary respite.

Although he felt that many seeds had been sown for future problems to sprout, after some consideration, he decided to ignore them for now.

These issues stemmed from a mixture of Yuri's forthrightness and unfamiliarity with worldly matters, Liliana's hidden outrageous facet as someone who was knowledgeable yet lacking in common sense, as well as Kusanagi Godou's natural carelessness.

Upon hearing of this trio's conversation that had taken place, a certain person would ridicule "Isn't this a farce played by the three stooges!?" This occurred slightly afterwards.

"Given this opportunity, why don't we eat Shizuka's treat while we wait for Kaoru-san to arrive?"

At Godou's suggestion, the trio made their way to a park near the school.

On the way, they visited a convenience store and bought some oden^[2] stew, Chinese buns and bottled tea etc.

"Because I have never had this type of food before, it feels a little exciting."

"Indeed, even though these dishes cannot be said to be particularly healthy."

Prompted by a comment from the classy young lady who apparently never bought junk food snacks on her way home from school, the female knight responded as she bought convenience store confectionery with a partially critical expression on her face.

The trio sat down on a bench in the park and began to have a simple dinner.

Godou was the first to comment on his sister's cooking.

"Hmm. Not particularly bad tasting but nothing outstanding either. Standard fried noodles sold at stalls."

"Not really, the flavor of the sauce is quite savory."

"Do remember that this is the fruit of Shizuka-san's well-intentioned efforts."

Godou's tactless criticism was met with Yuri and Liliana's reprimands.

That said, this was simply stall food at a temple fair that never aspired to reach the pinnacle of B-class delicacies. Besides, compared to taste, cost would have been the primary consideration when purchasing ingredients.

In actual fact, in terms of cooking skill, Shizuka's level was similar to her elder brother's—Based on these three points, Godou's comment was completely tactless indeed.

The Kusanagi siblings were raised by the laissez-faire mother and the grandfather who was frequently away from home.

Completely undaunted by the prospects of cooking in the kitchen, nevertheless, they could not be described as particularly great chefs. In this regard, the two siblings were identical.

After the meal, Godou received a text message from Kaoru.

"I am truly shocked and awed to have the king personally come out here to greet me, Godou-san."

Saying that, Sayanomiya Kaoru bowed her head solemnly.

This was the action she took the instant she spotted Godou after exiting the school gates.

However, compared to her excessively exaggerated words, the smile appearing on her lips was easygoing. Her head-bowing motion was also quite graceful. On the other hand, she usually displayed a slightly wry smile when performing this very Kaoru-style action.

Nevertheless, Godou could not help but ask:

"Kaoru-san... What is with this outfit?"

"Looks great, doesn't it? I had it specially made."

Kaoru's face displayed androgynous beauty as usual. Her body was also rather slender and exhibited her characteristic appearance that simultaneously resembled a beautiful girl and a handsome youth.

Like the sort of handsome youth who made appearances in traditional shoujo manga, her beautiful appearance seemed to be the stuff of dreams. Furthermore, Kaoru was dressed in gray uniform today. A male one.

"Isn't this an all-girls school? Doesn't this uniform(?) break school rules?"

"Fufufu. After all, I don't really like wearing sailor-style uniforms."

As if ignoring her gender recorded in the family registry, Kaoru declared:

"I simply prepared a uniform suitable for myself. Oh dear, it really took quite a lot of work for me to win over the teachers, the student council and the parent teacher association in order to be able to wear this outfit from day one."

She was probably referring to the clandestine tasks she undertook, making full use of her natural oratory and negotiation skills as well as her beauty and intellect.

While thinking it was such a waste for her to be squandering her rare talents on something like this, Godou summed up his critical reaction succinctly.

"Or from the very beginning, you could have selected a school that allowed students to wear casual clothing..."

"See, when a mountain stands in your way, it is only natural to want to climb over it. Besides, I quite enjoy the ____ uniforms here."

Her statement should probably be amended by filling the blank with the words "watching the girls who wear."

Godou secretly supplemented in his mind.

While they were conversing, girls passed by them one after another. They kept greeting Kaoru with bowed heads, using anachronistic greetings like "Good morrow, Kaoru-sama" or "Good greetings."

Everyone seemed to know Kaoru. Truly living up to the term "popular."

"By the way, since we have all arrived at the school gates, why did you send your request to me only by text message?"

That was why Godou had left Yuri and Liliana behind to receive Kaoru alone.

"If I was sighted together with girls like Yuri and Liliana, the girls in the school are going to get jealous. You're male, Godou-san, so it doesn't matter."

"...Normally, it should be the other way around."

Godou discovered he was apparently being used as a shield to handle her fans.

As Kaoru uttered taboo words incongruent with her identity as a female high school student at an all-girls school, Godou accompanied her back to the park.

Meeting up with Liliana and Yuri, they called a car from the History Compilation Committee. The next place they traveled to was a western mansion situated in Area 3 of the Chiyoda ward.

This was the Sayanomiya residence, the place where Committee members like Amakasu frequented.

Kaoru led Godou's entourage into the study.

"The sacred talisman with ties to the Illustrious Sage, True Lord Erlang... I never expected it would go as far as to attempt to harm you despite your identity as a Campione, Godou-san—My utmost apologies. Our predictions were apparently too naive."

"But anyway, why did it target me?"

Intrigued by the situation as she listened to Kaoru's apology, Yuri spoke up softly:

"Perhaps you were targeted precisely because you are Godou-san."

"Did you see something, Mariya? An oracle from spirit vision perhaps?"

"Oh no, nothing like that. It is a little difficult to explain at once..."

"...I see. I get it now."

Leaving Godou in clueless ignorance, even Liliana began to nod.

"If True Lord Erlang is a deity who vanquishes evil and upholds justice, then it is understandable why he would target Kusanagi Godou. After all, since he is the benevolent god who subdued the Great Sage Equaling Heaven, Sun Wukong, in the past, it stands even more to reason."

"You two truly amaze me. Come on and tell me what the reason is. I am completely clueless."

Despite Godou's request, the two girls seemed hesitant to speak.

As for Kaoru, she simply made a slightly wry smile as she cast an apologetic gaze at Yuri and Liliana.

After a brief moment, Yuri was the first to speak.

"Basically, since it is an evil-slaying artifact that can even weaken Marquis Voban's authority..."

"Kusanagi Godou, who has developed into a Devil King no way inferior to that elderly man, had also been judged as evil that must be vanquished."

Liliana's supplementary explanation made Godou realize with a shock.

"In other words, I have been judged as a person who repeatedly subjects the world to unspeakable acts of evil!?"

" "Apparently so." "

Yuri and Liliana expressed agreement simultaneously, causing Godou to bow his head in dejection.

On the other hand, Kaoru picked up a box made of paulownia wood from the desk in the study.

"Putting the reason for the incident aside for now, this is the talisman in question—Hmm?"

As soon as she spoke, a troubled expression surfaced on her dream-like face of a handsome youth.

She frantically opened the box, having apparently discovered something abnormal. Although not up to Yuri's level, Kaoru was still an outstanding user of spirit vision. Godou and the rest also gathered to peer into the box.

...It was empty. The paulownia box contained nothing inside.

"It was definitely still here yesterday, so when exactly did it..."

Just as Kaoru mused softly with a tone like a famous detective showing interest in a mystery—

Godou shuddered once. Power suddenly surged through his entire body.

A "god" was nearby—Or rather, had already arrived?

Before Godou could locate the opponent's location, Yuri started to scream.

"Behind you—Behind Kaoru-san, Godou-san!"

Sayanomiya Kaoru was standing by the desk. Appearing behind her was the [Three Eyes] from earlier!

The young leader of the History Compilation Committee took action with great decisiveness.

Rather than turning to look back, she immediately ran in Godou's direction.

Since a being with the likes of a god or divine beast had manifested, there was no time for redundant actions. Only by taking cover behind the god-slayer as quickly as possible could one hope to find sanctuary.

Choosing this most appropriate measure without wasting a second, she swiftly put it into motion—

Indeed, her judgment was swift. However, it was still a step too late.

The [Three Eyes] floated up. The refined and dignified pair of eyes as well as the vertically oriented third eye. The pupils of the three eyes were infused with blue light simultaneously and glowed with brilliance.

Instantly, Kaoru's pupils also shone with blue light.

With a whoosh, Kaoru's slender body leaped gallantly, but not to hide behind Godou's back.

Instead, she sent a splendid spinning kick towards Godou's face. Profound mastery in martial arts were fully exhibited by her motions.

"Haa—!"

With a vigorous yelled, Kaoru unleashed a high kick with keen aim and speed.

Godou instantly bent down, almost losing balance and sitting on the floor.

Kaoru's leg swept through the spot at the height where his face had been. Had he failed to evade, the kick would have landed squarely and mercilessly. While confirming his judgment to be correct, Godou rolled over the carpet to distance himself from Kaoru.

Using the momentum from the roll, he immediately stood up.

Although the action was a little awkward, it did not matter. He had evaded the attack without injury and instantly renewed his posture.

"Please be careful! The will of True Lord Erlang inhabiting the Illustrious Sage's talisman has apparently taken control over Kaoru-san. It aims to vanquish you, Godou-san, who has been deemed evil!"

Probably receiving a spirit vision, Yuri gave a series of warnings.

From the way Kaoru looked, she definitely was not her usual self. Somehow gone were the dream-like beauty and libertine gaze that displayed curiosity towards everything. Flashing with blue light, her pupils were filled with stern fighting spirit, making her beautiful and courageous face even more striking in appearance!

Then the figure in the gray school uniform leaped again, intending to attack Godou once more.

"Please wake up, Sayanomiya Kaoru!"

Liliana swiftly inserted herself in between Godou and Kaoru.

Blue-eyed Kaoru extended her right hand as if intending to eliminate the interloper.

Raising her fist vertically, she sent a right hook towards the silver-haired girl's face. Godou watched with tongue-tied amazement. Like the kick just now, Kaoru was using Chinese martial arts.

Liliana blocked Kaoru's punch with her right arm.

She did not draw her beloved magic sword, probably to avoid harming Kaoru's body.

However, controlled by the "evil-slaying will," Kaoru nonchalantly swung her fist down on Liliana's arm.

The silver-haired female knight went "Ugh!?" in response, greatly alarmed and surprised.

However, she did not back down and was just about to grab and pick up Kaoru when—In the next instant, she was crouching on the ground.

This was the result of Kaoru's left index finger pressing on Liliana's chest.

"Guh. The technique known as pressure point attacking...!"

Crouched on the floor, Liliana groaned. Her body seemed immobilized by paralysis.

Attacking vitals and pressure points on the human body to subdue enemies effortlessly—

This was indeed a technique used by the Chinese demonic cult leader. The Jiuweixue pressure point was located on the chest. Godou had learned this piece of trivia from her direct disciple.

Next it was going to be his turn—

Just as Godou readied a stance, Kaoru went "Haa!" with another vigorous yell.

Then Yuri went "kyah" and collapsed, apparently losing strength in lower body as a result of the yell. Furthermore, her legs extending out from beneath her uniform skirt were knocking together noisily as they trembled.

Apparently, Yuri no longer had the strength to stand.

Having neutralized a Hime-Miko with a vigorous shout, Kaoru turned towards Godou and approached.

Her strikingly beautiful face was like the midday sun.

Watching her expression which aptly conjured descriptions like "justice," "benevolence" or "hero," Godou muttered:

"...It wanted to avoid getting Mariya involved?"

Before Yuri could take any action like Liliana, a harmless method was used to neutralize her—

Was this a show of concern? The only "evil" that needed to be defeated was Kusanagi Godou alone. As if admitting to the doubts in Godou's mind, Kaoru's beautiful face smiled. Immediately, a bladed polearm appeared in her hand all of a sudden.

The double-edged trident—A great blade shaped into three prongs with sharp edges on the two lateral sides.

Rather than a Japanese weapon it was indeed a Chinese blade. Wielding the double-edged trident, Kaoru charged at Godou with great agility.

Erlang's mercy as the "benevolent one" could not possibly be extended towards Godou, probably.

Without any hesitation, Kaoru performed a downward diagonal slash.

Godou was not necessarily incapable of evading this double-edged trident.

The enemy before him was neither a great sinner who had caused the people suffering nor a user of monstrous strength beyond normal parameters. Given the opponent's level of martial technique, divine speed capable of handling the [Raptor] was very probable.

Under such circumstance, there was only one incarnation Godou could depend on.

The double-edged trident struck Godou's left shoulder. Slash—

The double-edged trident continued to tear through Godou's skin, muscles, collarbone, ribs etc, slashing its way towards his heart.

The only substance obstructing this attack was the bones of a Campione, possibly even tougher than the hardest metals on earth. Unimaginable heat and pain tore through Godou's body and mind.

Sacrificing his left shoulder to the slash wound, Godou was able to use the [Camel] incarnation in return.

He made it. The double-edged trident had yet to reach his heart.

Obtaining combat skills and leg strength that allowed him to fight war gods on equal footing in the past, Godou unleashed swift forward kicks against Kaoru repeatedly. This was a type of kicking strike akin to shoving the opponent away using the soles of the feet.

Kaoru and her slender body was sent flying by his kick.

That said, this simply kicked her away. No damage had been caused to Kaoru's body.

Having gradually mastered his authority, Godou was now capable of restraining the [Camel]'s destructive power to a certain extent. Hence, he was able to perform martial arts like that—

After kicking Kaoru away with a forward kick, Godou turned and performed a spinning kick instead of lowering his leg.

This was followed by a high kick upwards. However, he did not make a direct hit.

Brushing past Kaoru's temple with his foot, he gave her a concussive blow to the brain. His aim was to cause a concussion with minimum damage in order to neutralize Kaoru.

Pulling it off without a hitch, Godou rendered Kaoru unconscious and she collapsed as though turned off by a switch.

Kaoru unconscious. Liliana paralyzed. And Yuri with her legs gone limp.

The three girls were in a rather awkward state. But at least a crisis had been averted.

After Godou nodded towards Yuri and Liliana who were still conscious, the two girls displayed relieved expressions.

"True Lord Erlang's will... Seems to have left the room already."

"Looks like it. But why did it possess Sayanomiya Kaoru instead of Mariya Yuri or me who were by Kusanagi Godou's side? Did it choose the person who had used the evil-slaying sacred talisman?"

Yuri and Liliana's exchange prompted Godou to recall.

Amakasu's words. "There were two elite masters among those involved in the incident, so for the sake of saving lives, a risk was taken." One of them was Kaoru while the other was—

A troubling premonition surged in Godou's heart. Could it really be...?

"If my premonition is correct, the next person he will try to possess is Seishuuin?"

The other person, who along with Kaoru had attempted to use the talisman related to True Lord Erlang, was indeed Godou's companion who carried the title of the premier Hime-Miko.

Greatly shocked, Yuri immediately took out her cellphone.

"I-I am going to try to see if I can contact Ena-san!"

Since she was only drained of strength in her legs, moving her upper body should be fine.

Operating with stiff movements, she called up the contact list and pressed dial. However, she quickly hung her head.

"The call is not going through..."

Godou could not help but look at his right arm.

The divine sword residing there was also supposed to be akin to a "partner" to Seishuuin Ena. Furthermore, despite the sword's usually undisciplined attitude in normal situations, its personality was actually quite meddlesome whenever conflicts were encountered.

In spite of vast separation in physical distance, it maintained a spiritual bond with Ena—

"Hey... If Seishuuin were to encounter any mishap, tell this to her."

Godou knew that he should take care of the girls right here.

But instead, he exited the study.

Rushing rapidly by himself along the corridors in the Sayanomiya residence, he made his way to the garden.

"Call out my name if you encounter danger. Only by doing so will I be able to save you."

Just as Godou finally walked out the entryway and looked up to gaze at the dark starlit sky above Tokyo—

Godou heard a faint call transmitted from somewhere faraway. —Your Majesty, Ena has a bit of a bad feeling over here, please hurry over.

Instantly, gentle wind began to swirl beneath Godou's legs.

The gentle wind formed a vortex that gradually increased in strength, soon becoming a powerful cyclone.

When someone in a dangerous crisis called out Godou's name, it allowed him to fly to their location. This was Verethragna's first incarnation, the gust of [Wind].

This power currently activated to transport Kusanagi Godou to some unknown location.

—To be continued...

References

1. ↑ Illustrious Sage(顯聖): taken literally, 顯 means to manifest while 聖 means sage or saint when used as a title but also carries the meanings of divine, holy, sacred.
2. ↑ Oden(おでん): a Japanese winter dish consisting of ingredients such as eggs, radish, konnyaku and fish cakes stewed in broth. Often sold from food carts and Japanese convenience stores during winter.

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